

21st Century Skills

The 21st century skills as identified by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills¹

Learning and Innovation Skills

Creativity and Innovation

- Demonstrating originality and inventiveness in work
- Developing, implementing and communicating new ideas to others
- Being open and responsive to new and diverse perspectives
- Acting on creative ideas to make a tangible and useful contribution to the domain in which the innovation occurs

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

- Exercising sound reasoning in understanding
- Making complex choices and decisions
- Understanding the interconnections among systems
- Identifying and asking significant questions that clarify various points of view and lead to better solutions
- Framing, analyzing and synthesizing information in order to solve problems and answer questions

Communication and Collaboration

- Articulating thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively through speaking and writing
- Demonstrating ability to work effectively with diverse teams
- Exercising flexibility and willingness to be helpful in making necessary compromises to accomplish a common goal
- Assuming shared responsibility for collaborative work

Information, Media and Technology Skills

Information Literacy

- Accessing information efficiently and effectively, evaluating information critically and competently and using information accurately and creatively for the issue or problem at hand
- Possessing a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of information

Media Literacy

- Understanding how media messages are constructed, for what purposes and using which tools, characteristics and conventions
- Examining how individuals interpret messages differently, how values and points of view are included or excluded and how media can influence beliefs and behaviors
- Possessing a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of information

ICT (Information, Communications and Technology) Literacy

- Using digital technology, communication tools and/or networks appropriately to access, manage, integrate, evaluate and create information in order to function in a knowledge economy
- Using technology as a tool to research, organize, evaluate and communicate information, and the possession of a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of information

Life and Career Skills

Flexibility and Adaptability

- Adapting to varied roles and responsibilities
- Working effectively in a climate of ambiguity and changing priorities

Initiative and Self-Direction

- Monitoring one's own understanding and learning needs
- Going beyond basic mastery of skills and/or curriculum to explore and expand one's own learning and opportunities to gain expertise
- Demonstrating initiative to advance skill levels towards a professional level
- Defining, prioritizing and completing tasks without direct oversight
- Utilizing time efficiently and managing workload
- Demonstrating commitment to learning as a lifelong process

Social and Cross-Cultural Skills

- Working appropriately and productively with others
- Leveraging the collective intelligence of groups when appropriate
- Bridging cultural differences and using differing perspectives to increase innovation and the quality of work

Productivity and Accountability

- Setting and meeting high standards and goals for delivering quality work on time
- Demonstrating diligence and a positive work ethic (e.g., being punctual and reliable)

Leadership and Responsibility

- Using interpersonal and problem-solving skills to influence and guide others toward a goal
- Leveraging strengths of others to accomplish a common goal
- Demonstrating integrity and ethical behavior
- Acting responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind

¹Source: Partnership for 21st Century Skills (www.21stcenturyskills.org). Used with permission.